REMARKS

Claims 17-30 are pending with independent method claim 17 amended to address the objection presented in paragraph 2 (on page 2) of the Office action and further amended to more fully define the invention; additionally, dependent claims 17-20 and 22-23 have been amended. No claims have been cancelled and no new claims presented. Claims 1-16 (drawn to the apparatus) are withdrawn.

This paper is in response to the Office action dated Sept. 11, 2006 in which elected method claims 17-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) and 102(e) as anticipated by Loucks et al. (U. S. Pat. No. 3,084,076) and Sakaida et al. (U. S. Pat. No. 7,022,244); claims 22-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Loucks et al. or Sakaida et al.; and, lastly, claims 27-30 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Loucks or Sakaida et al. in view of Ni (U. S. Pat. No. 6,200,387)

A reconsideration is respectfully requested in view of the discussion below.

Independent method claim 17 has been amended to further define the method including a redefinition of the encapsulated object as an integrated circuit and the deposit of the liquid encapsulant-removing agent as forming a shape-sustaining deposit.

Minor amendments have been made to various of the dependent claims 17-20 and 22-23 to provide, inter alia, consistent language with claim 17.

It is submitted that the applied references do not anticipate nor render the pending claims obvious.

Loucks et al. is directed to a method using pressurized steam containing a solubizing agent to clean enclosed vessels or piping systems having inlets and outlets; while Loucks relates to cleaning, applicant believes the disclosure/teaching therein is too far removed from the claimed spot encapsulant removal to suggest the claimed method.

Sakaida is directed to a method of forming superfine liquid droplets that are entrained in a headed gaseous stream for use in integrated circuit micromachining; Sakaida clearly does not teach a shape-sustaining deposit on a selected area of a encapsulant surface.

Lastly, Ni is directed to a method of batch-treating semiconductor wafers using heated nebulized chemicals and presents various flow/temperature controls. However, Ni's disclosure does nothing to suggest combination or modification of Loucks et al. and/or Sakaida in the direction of the claimed subject matter.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and an indication thereof is respectfully requested.

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